

DELL

BUCK JONES

NO. 733

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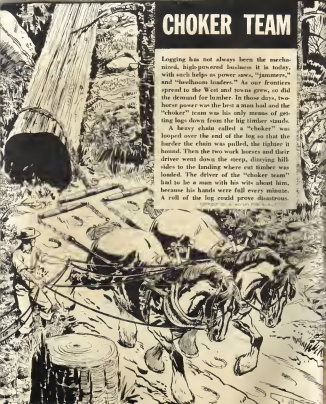


CHOKER TEAM

Logging has not always been the mechanized, high-powered business it is today, with such helps as power saws, "jammers," and "heelhoam loaders." As our frontiers spread to the West and towns grew, so did the demand for lumber. In those days, two-horse power was the best a man had and the "choker" team was his only means of getting logs down from the big timber stands.

A heavy chain called a "choker" was looped over the end of the log so that the harder the chain was pulled, the tighter it became. Then the two work horses and their driver went down the steep, dizzying hill-sides to the landing where cut timber was loaded. The driver of the "choker team" had to be a man with his wits about him, because his hands were full every minute. A roll of the log could prove disastrous.

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BUCK JONES

PERILOUS CROSSING



HI, NATE! JUST SAW SOME OF JIM WOODRICK'S STOCK OVER THERE! HAVE YOU SEEN HIM AROUND?

WHAT? OH, SURE...! NO, JIM DIDN'T COME ALONG THIS TRIP! JUST SENT HIS SON AND THE FOREMAN!

HIS SON? BUT...BUT I THOUGHT HIS SON HAD BEEN LOST LONG AGO, ON HIS WAY WEST!

I THOUGHT SO, TOO, SURE! BECAUSE HE JUST TURNED UP AGAIN, THAT'S ALL!

YOU'LL PROBABLY FIND HIM AT THE BANK IN TOWN! CAN'T MISS HIM! HE LOOKS JUST LIKE JIM!

THANKS, NATE!

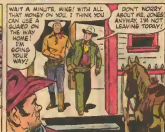
H-H-M! THIS IS MIGHTY STRANGE! I REMEMBER JIM TELLING ME ABOUT HIS BOY!

IT WAS RIGHT AFTER JIM FIRST CAME WEST, A WIDOWER!... HE LEFT HIS TWO-YEAR-OLD BOY BACK EAST WITH THE GRANDMOTHER! WHEN JIM GOT HIS RANCH GOING, HE SENT FOR THE BOY!

...BUT THE STAGE CARRYING HIM VANISHED AND NO TRACE HAS EVER BEEN FOUND OF ANY ABOARD! POOR JIM... HE ALWAYS FIGURED HOSTILE INDIANS WERE TO BLAME!

HERE'S THE BANK, SILVER-E! PRETTY CROWDED TOO! I HOPE JIM'S SON IS AS EASY TO SPOT AS NATE CLAIMS!

BANK





WELL, I GUESS MIKE WON'T
NEED ME FOR A GUARD
AFTER ALL.
SO I'LL SEE
YOU LATER!

SO LONG,
JONES! DON'T
WORRY, I'LL
STICK WITH MIK
TILL HE GET
BACK TO THE
RANCH!

WHAT ROTTEN LUCK! THAT
MOSEY GOMPONE WOULD
HAVE TO SHOW UP NOW!
OH WELL, HE PROBABLY
WON'T HANG AROUND
LONG!

IT DOESN'T
MATTER, WADE!
I'M NOT GOING ALONG
WITH THIS CRAZY PLAN
OF YOURS, ANYWAY!

YOU CAN TAKE THE MONEY HE GOT
FOR THE CATTLE! THAT SHOULD
SATISFY YOU!

HOLD ON, KID! I'M
NOT TAKING CHICKEN
FEED! I'M PLAYING FOR
BIG STAKES NOW!

AND IF YOU GET ANY MORE
IDEAS ABOUT BACKING OUT,
JUST REMEMBER ABILENE!

THE NEXT EVENING RAYD LUCK
RIDE CROSS-COUNTRY...

WELL, SILVER-B! SINCE
OUR BUSINESS IN GRANITE
CITY IS CLEARED UP WHY DON'T
WE MOSEY OVER
AND SEE JIM!

AND AFTER A FEW MILES...

HEY, JIM, YOU OLD
BESMIT! HOLD UP LONG
ENOUGH TO SAY HELLO!



RECKON MIKE IS A LITTLE AMPED BY ALL THIS, TOO! 'COURSE, HE DOESN'T REMEMBER ME...
I GUESS THINGS LIKE THIS TAKE PLenty OF TIME TO STRAIGHTEN OUT!

STILL SPENDS MOST OF HIS TIME WITH YANCY... EVEN SLEEPS IN THE BUNKHOUSE!



SURE HOPE YOU'LL STAY ON FOR A WHILE, BUCK! MIKE AND YANCY ARE STILL DOWN AT THE CATTLE AUCTION!

BE GLAD TO! AFTER ALL YOU STILL MAKE THE BEST COFFEE IN THE COUNTRY!



'NIGHT, BUCK! SEE YOU IN THE MORNING!

GOOD NIGHT, JIM!

I COULDN'T LEAVE NOW IF I WANTED TO! SOMETHING ABOUT YANCY BOthers ME... WHY DOES HE SHADOW MIKE ALL THE TIME?



NEXT DAY...

THIS LOOKS LIKE MIKE AND YANCY NOW!

YEP! THAT'S THEM ALL RIGHT! HOPE THEY GOT A GOOD PRICE FOR THE CATTLE!



JONES! THIS IS A SURPRISE! FIGURED YOU'D BE LONG GONE BY NOW!

'FRAND NOT YANCY! I'M TRYING JIM. A LONG-OVERDUE VISIT!



WELL, MIKE, HOW'D YOU DO AT THE AUCTION?

NOT BAD AT ALL! I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT LATER... I'M TIRED NOW... GOING TO TAKE A REST!



LATE THAT NIGHT, SUCK IS AWAKENED BY SILVER-BE'S NEIGHING...





EARLY THE NEXT MORNING...





MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE MCCORMACK RANCH...







FEW MINUTES AFTER HANCY LEAVES, BUCK
RETURNS TO THE RANCH...





HELP!

WHAT'S THAT?
THE BARN!
SOMEONE'S
IN THERE!



MIKE! WHAT IN BLAZES
HAS HAPPENED?

IT'S ... IT'S
YANCY, BUCK!
HE DID IT!
YOU'VE GOT TO
STOP HIM!



WHAT DO YOU
MEAN? WHERE
IS HE?

HE'S GOT JIM IN THE
BUCKBOARD ... GOING
TO SEND IT INTO RED
GORGE WHERE
THE BRIDGE
WASHED OUT!



THERE'S ONLY ONE CHANCE!
TO OVERTAKE YANCY BEFORE
HE GETS TO THE BRIDGE!

WAIT A MINUTE,
BUCK! I KNOW
A SHORT CUT
OVER
DEADWOOD
MOUNTAIN!



THE TRUTH IS, BUCK,
I'M NOT JIM'S SON AT
ALL! YANCY PLANNED THIS
THING BECAUSE I LOOKED
SO MUCH LIKE JIM!

BUT WHY DID YOU
GO ALONG WITH
HIM, MIKE?



IT ALL STARTED BACK IN ARIZONA!
I HAPPENED TO GET INTO A
FIGHT WITH
A TOWN
BOGGARTY!

"...THE FIGHT ENDED WHEN I GOT IN
A LUCKY PUNCH AND FLOORED HIM..."



"THEN I LEFT THE CAFE AND WENT BACK
TO MY HOTEL ROOM..."



"BUT IT WASN'T LONG TILL NANCY RAN INTO MY ROOM! I WAS MIGHTY SURPRISED
AS I'D NEVER EVEN MET HIM BEFORE..."



"THINGS HAPPENED SO FAST THEN, I
COULDN'T THINK STRAIGHT! ALL I COULD
DO WAS FOLLOW NANCY!..."

"NEXT THING I KNEW, WE WERE ON THE TRAIL,
RIDING HARD!..."



WE ENDED UP AT JIM'S PLACE! ONLY THEN
DID NANCY TELL ME HE WAS JIM'S FATHERMAN...

LISTEN, KID! YOU LOOK JUST
LIKE THIS JIM! NOW YOU
PRETEND TO BE HIS LONG-
LOST SON! I'VE GOT AN IDEA!

BUT I DON'T
LIKE THIS NANCY.
WHY DO I
HAVE TO
DO THAT?



BUT THERE WAS NO ARGUING WITH
NANCY! HE HELD THAT RUGGER OVER
MY HEAD SO I'D GO ALONG WITH HIS
PLAN! BUT WHEN IT CAME RIGHT DOWN
TO MURDERING JIM — I
HAD TO MAKE A BREAK!
THAT'S WHY HE
TIED ME UP!



LOOKS LIKE NANCY WILL
HAVE A LOT TO ANSWER
FOR, KID — SURE
HOPE WE'RE IN TIME!



THE BRIDGE
ISN'T FAR
AHEAD!

AND THERE'S THE WAGON!
LET'S GO, SILVER-B!

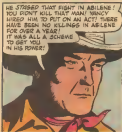


SO LONG, JIM! HAVE
A GOOD TRIP! HEYHAAA!
GET UP, THERE!









BUCK JONES

and the

THE MAN CALLED JOHNSON

A SHORT DISTANCE OUTSIDE THE TOWN OF BEAVER ROCK...

FALL OUT OF THAT SADDLE, NESTER! THIS IS A HOLDUP!

YOU'VE MADE A MISTAKE — I HAVEN'T GOT ANYTHING WORTH STEALING!



DON'T ARGUE WITH ME!

SHORT KEEPER — THEY FORGED AND KIDNAPED — HURRIEDLY SEARCHED HIS POCKET...

FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS! LOOKS LIKE HE WASN'T LYING! UNLESS... WAIT A MINUTE! WHAT'S THIS LETTER?

BEAVER ROCK BANK

Dear Mr. Johnson,

As requested, we have completed arrangements for your withdrawal of the \$10,000 to your deposited bill this bank eight years ago.

HE-S-ELL! THIS IS MORE LIKE IT! \$10,000 JUST SITTING THERE WAITING TO BE PICKED UP!... THIS GIVES ME IDEAS!



UH-OH! THERE'S TROUBLE! LOOKS LIKE BUCK JONES! I'D BETTER GET OUT OF HERE FAST!



IN THE DISTANCE, BUCK WHEELS SHARPLY AS HE HEARS LIKE JOHNSON CALL FOR HELP...

HELP!

GODDAM!



YOU HURT, MISTER?

JUST MY ARM!— THANKS TO YOU THAT HORSE DROPPED EVERYTHING AND RAN LIKE A RABBIT!



WERE YOU LEADING FOR BEAVER ROCK?

YES... I WAS ON MY WAY TO THE BANK THERE!



I'M GOING INTO TOWN!— BE GLAD TO RIDE WITH YOU AS SOON AS WE GET THAT ARM IN A SLING!

I'D SURE APPRECIATE IT!— THAT NO-GOOD HORSE MAY STILL BE HANGING AROUND!



WHAT DID HE LOOK LIKE?

TALL... BLACK HAIR AND BEARD... AND A SCAR LIKE A WHIPPLASH RIGHT DOWN THE SIDE OF HIS FACE!

**MEADVILLE, MONT
KEGER HAS ARRIVED
IN BINDER ROCK...**



**INSIDE THE BANK, HE
BEGINS HIS DECEPTION...**



**HIDDEN IN KEGER'S HAND IS LUKE JOHNSON'S
IDENTIFICATION CARD, FROM WHICH KEGER CAREFULLY
COPIES THE SIGNATURE...**







A FEW MINUTES LATER, AS THE COACH IS ABOUT TO LEAVE...

WELL, THERE, BUCK, MY BOY!

KEEP AWAKE UP THERE, JIM! I'VE HEARD RUMORS OF HOLDUP MEN OPERATING NEAR THE RED GRANGE!



WHEN? THAT WAS TOO CLOSE!



HELLO, SHERIFF! MEET LUKE JOHNSON!

HONKY!



SECONDS LATER IN THE BEAVER ROCK BANK...

I'M LUKE JOHNSON! I WROTE YOU A LETTER, AND...

WHAT DID YOU SAY YOUR NAME WAS?

SHERIFF! THIS MAN'S AN IMPOSTER! LUKE JOHNSON WAS IN HERE FIFTEEN MINUTES AGO!









SOON, AFTER A HARD RIDE, BUCK OVERTAKES THE STAGE...



AS THE DRIVER STARTS TO REIN IN, KESSEE MAKES A DESPERATE MOVE...



**JUST AT THAT MOMENT, A
RUT IN THE ROAD ROCKS
THE COACH...**



**... AND KEEGER IS THROWN OFF-BALANCE AS HE GRABS
FOR SUPPORT, HIS FINGER INADVERTENTLY SQUEEZES THE
TRIGGER...**

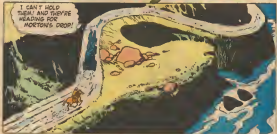


**... AND THE BULLET FLOWS UP DIRT BESIDE
THE LEAD HORSE...**



**IN A FLASH, THE COACH IS
THUNDERING AHEAD, ITS TEAM
OF HORSES OUT OF CONTROL...**





SEEING THE DANGER THAT LIES AHEAD, BUCK FORCES SILVER-B TO PILE ON MORE SPEED...



BUT AS THE COACH SNEEVES TOWARD THE TREACHEROUS TURN...



SWIFT AS AN ARROW,
SILVER-B LEAPS ACROSS
THE DEEP CANYON...



THIS IS GOING TO
BE TOUGH! BUT AT
LEAST WE'VE GOT A
CHANCE OF STOPPING
THEM!



NOW—
SHOW THEM,
SILVER-B!

THE LEAD HORSES SKEWEE AND SLOW AT THE SIGHT OF TOWERING
SILVER-B, AND AS THEY TURN AWAY FROM THE RIVER, ROCK
GIRLS TAKE REINS...



WHOA, THERE!
WHOA!



HE'S GETTING
AWAY!

WITH ANOTHER GREAT LEAP, SILVER-B PLUNGES INTO THE RIVER FAR BELOW...





ALBANYVILLE, IN TOWN...



A FEW MINUTES LATER BUCK AND KREGER ARE ARMED IN THE DOORWAY OF THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE...



WHAT ARE YOU BLABBERING ABOUT? I NEVER SAW YOU BEFORE IN MY LIFE!



SEARCH HIM, SHERIFF!

YOU KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF ME!

W-H-W-H!



QUICK, HIS INTEREST AROUSED BY SOME OF THE NEVADA MAIL, PICKS UP A PIECE OF IT...

DO YOU BOTH STILL INSIST YOU'RE LUKE JOHNSON, EH?



WELL—WE STILL HAVE ONLY ONE WAY OF PROVING ANYTHING AND THAT'S BY MATCHING THIS SIGNATURE!



GIVE ME THAT PEN! I'M GOOD AND SURE NOW! I'LL SIGN WITH MY LEFT HAND AND STILL MAKE IT MATCH!

YOU'VE ALREADY GOT MY SIGNATURE AT THE BANK!



YOU SIGN AGAIN—RIGHT HERE IN FRONT OF ME!



THE SHERIFF CAREFULLY COMPARES THE TWO SIGNATURES. THEN...



A PLEDGE **DELL** TO PARENTS
COMIC

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THE HAPPY CEREAL!



THE HAPPY SNACK!

